

**Basingstoke charity
gets funding boost**

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WE ALL NEED A MRS HOBBS

School volunteer's New Year medal for services to education

A PENSIONER who volunteers at a school in Basingstoke has spoken about how receiving a medal in the New Year's Honours list came "right out of the blue".

Maud Eleanor Hobbs, who is known by both her first and her middle names, has been volunteering at North Waltham Primary School over 18 years.

Mrs Hobbs, a widow, spends two days of the week at the school listening to children read, as well as helping out with other activities and admin tasks.

And, after being nominated by her granddaughter, she has been honoured with a British Empire Medal for volunteering and services to education.

"Getting the news that I am to receive the honour of a British Empire Medal came right out of the blue, but I am thrilled," said Maud.

"I thoroughly enjoy the time I spend at the primary school and it is so rewarding to be able to help the children achieve and progress in their learning. It is a fantastic school and I have made many friends there over the years."

North Waltham Primary School's head teacher, Jeffrey Maidment, praised the impact she has had at the school.

"All schools should have a 'Mrs Hobbs,' he said. "She undertakes a variety of tasks including sup-

By **James Booker**

news@basingstokeobserver.co.uk

porting those children who are sometimes less engaged in their learning than their peers.

"According to my calculations, since she first began volunteering here, she must have heard children reading around 33,000 times.

"Mrs Hobbs is an absolute gem and when she gives her first hand accounts of what life was like during the war, the children are totally captivated.

"Quite rightly, she is held in extremely high regard by all - pupils, parents, staff and governors."

Maud's husband Michael died on New Year's Day 1993. They had run a newsagents in Frodsham, Cheshire before retiring.

Councillor Roy Perry, leader of Hampshire County Council, added: "I am absolutely delighted that Mrs Hobbs has been recognised for her hard work and good service to the community and I have personally sent her my congratulations on behalf of the council.

"People like Maud wholly deserve to be recognised and to receive an honour such as this.

"They give their time selflessly with no expectation of reward, and are a hugely valuable asset in their community."



• Maud Eleanor Hobbs with granddaughter Harriet, who nominated her for the award

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Flood warnings are still in place

AREAS around Basingstoke have been placed on flood alert, following recent rain which has severely affected many parts of the country.

The Environment Agency put the area around the Upper River Loddon, including Basingstoke, Old Basing, Sherfield-on-Loddon, Chineham and Meadow Park, on flood alert on Saturday.

So far river levels on the Loddon have remained largely stable, though they are rising in some places and remains sensitive to further rainfall that could see it spill out into floodplains.

Hampshire County Council are continuing to work with the Envi-

By Adam Flinn

news@basingstokeobserver.co.uk

ronment Agency and emergency services to try and protect local communities.

Cllr Sean Woodward, the council's executive member for economy, transport and environment, said: "Highways teams and our contractors have been working round the clock to help residents during the difficult weather conditions.

"It is anticipated that our maintenance teams are likely to be very stretched and it will be nec-

essary to prioritise locations.

"I would ask people to bear with us while we do all we can to clear roads and incidents of flooding and fallen trees as quickly as we can.

"I would also ask residents to keep their gullies and drains cleared of fallen leaves and debris in an effort to reduce surface water flooding and the risk of flooding.

"Do not attempt to drive through or walk through fords, and be extra careful driving through any road surface water as it may be difficult to judge its depth."

David Bedlington, regional

flood risk manager for the Environment Agency, said: "Our incident rooms remain open, and our staff are working hard to provide up-to-the-minute updates.

"We continue to encourage the public areas to remain vigilant, and to keep a close eye on media reports and weather forecasts.

"It is important to take extra care in deep or flowing water; do not take risks if you are unsure of the depth of the water or of any hidden hazards."

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Top regional honour for Basingstoke army cadet

Donate your unwanted gifts

HAMPSHIRE'S air ambulance service is calling on residents to donate unwanted Christmas gifts as part of their ongoing charity recycling drive.

Hampshire and Isle of Wight Air Ambulance (HIOWAA) works with recycling partner Bag It Up to urge people to donate items of clothing they no longer want to a good cause.

Yellow textile banks are situated across Hampshire for anyone wishing to make a donation.

A full list of locations is available on the HIOWAA website.

John Perry, chief executive of HIOWAA said: "The majority of the textile donations we receive at this time of year have come from wardrobe clear-outs.

"With clothing banks at recycling sites across our region, there are plenty of places for people to take last season's garments and put them to a worthwhile cause."

HIOWAA will again be running their temporary charity shop in Whitechurch for two weeks this year, starting on May 23.

Call 023 8033 3377 if you would like to make any donations.

Do you have a story to share with our readers?

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A BASINGSTOKE army cadet has been promoted to one of the highest possible positions achievable, and is now the most senior cadet in North East Hampshire.

Lauren Brookes, 17, is a member of Old Basing Platoon, and has been promoted to Company Sergeant Major having been with the cadets since she was 12.

She was first promoted a year after joining to the rank of Lance Corporal, and further promotions followed until she was made Colour Sergeant during the 2013 summer camp.

During her service, Lauren has represented Hampshire at athletics and swimming up to national level, as well as helping adult staff to deliver training and acting as part of a team of cadets.

Her biggest achievement came in 2012 when she completed the 100-mile Nijmegen Marches with a team from the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Army Cadet Force.



• Newly-promoted Company Sergeant Major Lauren Brookes

Now as a Sergeant Major, Lauren's role is to lead and inspire junior cadets to follow in her footsteps.

The Army Cadet Force is the country's oldest youth organisation, and is aimed at 12 to 18-year-olds. For information on joining, go to www.armycadets.com or call 01962 865711.



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News Bites

Teens charged

TWO teenagers from Basingstoke have been charged in connection with a spate of vehicle crime in the town.

Between January 3 and 4, 32 cars in Bucksdon and Kempshott were either damaged or broken into.

Items taken included sat nav systems, radios, iPhone cables and binoculars.

A 14-year-old boy from Basingstoke and a 17-year-old boy of no fixed abode were charged with conspiracy to commit theft from motor vehicles.

Both appeared at Basingstoke Youth Court yesterday.

Trio wanted

AN 81-YEAR-OLD woman was left shaken after coming out of her bathroom to see three hooded youths leave her house.

The incident took place at the pensioner's house on the Drive in Oakley last Thursday between 12.30pm and 12.37pm.

Nothing was stolen during the burglary.

The three offenders are white, around 17 to 18-years-old and wearing dark clothing with hooded tops.

One of the youths was wearing a scarf over his face.

PC Mark Pullman from Basingstoke police station said: "Did you see three men in the area at the time of this incident?"

"Please remember to keep your windows and doors secure even if you are only popping out for a short time, sleeping or just in another room."

Contact 101 with information.

Alternatively, get in touch with Crimestoppers by calling 0800 555111 or visiting www.crimestoppers-uk.org.

Luck of the draw

ST Michael's Hospice has announced the lottery results of its draw from last week (January 3).

First prize of £1,000 goes to 33759 of Mapledurwell, while second prize of £100 goes to 56818 of Baughurst.

Ticket 27052 of Medstead scoops third prize of £50, and fourth prize of £20 is given to 52672 of Hartley Wintney.

Sixteen prizes of £5 are given to tickets 15307, 21707, 24709, 30395, 30705, 37520, 55538, 57224, 63101, 71317, 73053, 73338, 82724, 88556, 89214 and 95322.

Energy chief defends council's waste policy

BASINGSTOKE'S environmental chief has hit back at claims the council are not doing enough to promote recycling in the borough.

Councillor Robert Donnell, Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council (BDBC)'s cabinet member for Environment and Climate Change, was responding to claims the authority is among the lowest in the coun-

By James Booker

news@basingstokeobserver.co.uk

try for waste management and recycling.

Statistics released in November showed BDBC to be the 21st lowest council percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling or composting, out of 352

local authorities in the country.

Martin Heath, who runs Basingstoke Energy Services Co-op, said this was "a pretty poor performance".

"If you take out the big cities we are fifth worst for recycling and 23rd worst for waste per household," added Mr Heath.

"Basically being in the bottom 10 per cent is not where our aspirations should lie."

However, Cllr Donnell said the authority had taken a number of measures to improve recycling and waste management, and were always looking to improve on these statistics.

"We've introduced kerbside glass recycling, which has improved overall recycling," he said.

"We're always wanting to get recycling figures up, but we're

also wanting to maintain a weekly bin collection.

"If you look at most areas which have improved in recycling, it is the areas which have scrapped the weekly bin collection.

"I don't believe the people of Basingstoke want that, so we have to do things in a way which is possibly slower, and that's about encouraging people to recycle more.

"And we're making it easier for people to recycle more - for instance the Christmas tree recycling service that was introduced as well."

Cllr Donnell did admit the figures had not improved as much as the council had hoped.

One of the reasons for this, he stressed, was the bad weather that has restricted the amount of green garden waste. "Although we've had more people sign up for green garden waste than ever before," he said.

Despite the figures, the results are an improvement on previous years, a fact which Mr Heath said the council should be congratulated on.

Five charged with drugs offences after car search

FIVE people have been charged with drug offences in Basingstoke, after police stopped and searched a car in the town.

Officers stopped the car on Winchester Road at 12.30am on Tuesday, and discovered cash and substances believed to be illegal drugs.

A 21-year-old man from Wolverton Common, Tadley, was charged with possession with intent to supply a class A drug, and supply of a controlled class A drug.

A 19-year-old woman and 22-year-old man from Kings Orchard, Oakley, were charged with conspiracy to supply a class B drug.

All three were scheduled to appear at Basingstoke Magistrates Court yesterday morning.

Two men aged 20 and 21 were also charged in relation to the offence with possession of a controlled class B drug, and have been bailed to appear at the same court on January 28.

Anyone with information about the incident should contact PC Lee Bishop at Basingstoke police station on 101.

Alternatively, witnesses can speak to Crimestoppers anonymously by calling 0800 555 111.



• Ryanair's Michael Cawley presents the cheque to Mark Smith of Naomi House and Jackspace

Basingstoke charity gets extra funding boost

A **DONATION** of €12,000 has been made to Hampshire-based charity Naomi House and Jackspace by Ryanair, in the latest series of charities to receive support from the airline's 'Fly to Win' scratchcards.

The money will be used to provide care and support to children and young people with life-limiting conditions from across Southern England.

Ryanair's scratchcards sees passengers paying €2, with the proceeds

being split into numerous charity donations to organisations across Europe.

Mark Smith, deputy CEO for Naomi House and Jackspace, said: "We are delighted to receive this generous donation from Ryanair's fabulous charity scratchcards."

"This donation enables us to continue providing valuable care and support to children and young people."

"With less than 10 per cent of the £7m we seek to raise annually com-

ing from government, we are reliant on donations such as this to continue our work."

Ryanair's Robin Kiely said: "We are delighted to support Naomi House and Jackspace, which does so much to help children with life-limiting and life-threatening conditions."

"The hospice is one of many charities across Europe to receive ongoing donations from Ryanair's scratchcards, where passengers can win some fantastic prizes while helping out many great causes."

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Woman held after fighting near a school

POLICE in Basingstoke are appealing for information after two women were involved in a fight near a school on Sunday.

Two women were seen fighting and arguing on a pathway from Jefferson Road near to South View infant and junior school, Shooters Way.

A 21-year-old woman from Andover has already been charged with assault by beating and threats to kill after the incident, which took place between 12.30pm and 1.30pm.

It is believed two girls helped one of the women, while a man also intervened.

PC Lisa Graham said: "Was this you? Did you intervene or witness this incident?"

"I would like to hear from anyone who has information about this incident which could assist my investigation."

Anyone with any information is asked to contact PC Graham at Basingstoke Police Station on 101. Alternatively, get in touch with Crimestoppers.

Do you have a story to share with our readers?

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Will you be in it for the long haul?

By James Booker

news@basingstokeobserver.co.uk

ENTRIES have already opened for people to take part in this year's Basingstoke Half Marathon.

The race, which began in 2011, is rated among the top 10 half marathons in the country by Runner's World magazine, with the route taking in sight of a large chunk of the borough.

Basingstoke-based law firm Phillips Solicitors have also been announced as the new headline sponsors of the event, which is being organised by Destination Basingstoke.

Felicity Edwards, race director and managing director of Destination Basingstoke, is already chomping at the bit to get things underway for this year's race, set to take place on October 5.

"It is so exciting to be able to launch the race again," she said.

"After last year's success we are working hard to make the 2014 race the best ever and are so pleased to be working with Phillips and our other sponsors who really understand what we are trying to achieve with this race."

"There is so much local sup-



• Register for the Basingstoke Half Marathon now

port from businesses and sponsors, the running community, volunteers and residents.

"Half marathon day has become a big day for the town and Basingstoke has really proved how it is so welcoming to visitors from all over the world."

Jonathan Pender, partner at Phillips, expressed his delight at the firm stepping up their involvement with the race.

"Phillips has been proudly

associated with the Basingstoke Half Marathon since it began in 2011," he said.

"This year we are really excited to be the headline sponsors of the 2014 race."

"Having seen how the event has grown in size and popularity we can't wait to work with Destination Basingstoke to make it even bigger and better."

"There is such a great feeling of community pride around this event and it is an excellent

example of how running can bring people of all ages and abilities together."

"An ever-growing Team Phillips will be there to cheer runners on and to defend our corporate team champion position!"

There is currently an 'early bird' on line offer giving runners £5 off the standard price of entry until 31st January.

Visit www.basingstokehalf-marathon.com for more information.

Healthy food campaign is launched

COUNTY council chiefs are encouraging families to sign up to a new campaign designed to encourage healthy eating throughout January.

The new Smart Swaps campaign, a Change4Life initiative, wants families to make one swap to their everyday food and drink.

This can be simply by swapping sugary drinks for diet versions, water or skimmed milk.

Hampshire County Council are ensuring simple food and drink swaps are available for staff and customers who visit the county's countryside parks, libraries and workplace cafes.

A 'Taster Recipe' booklet is also available at libraries across the county.

Cllr Liz Fairhurst, Hampshire County Council's executive member for Adult Social Care and Public Health, said: "January always makes us want to eat healthily and this campaign makes it easy to start the year off with some healthier changes to your diet."

You can sign up to Smart Swaps by visiting www.nhs.uk/change4life.

By joining you will get receive healthier swap and meal ideas, money off vouchers and fridge magnets, as well as supportive emails and texts throughout the month.

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The business is continually expanding and includes a new mobile tyre fitting and home start service. A comprehensive diagnostic service can also be provided and the business issues many dealer level tools ranging

from Ford, Jaguar to Land Rover and Volkswagen.

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More complex issues include an Engine Control Unit (ECU) remapping service which makes the vehicle more responsive and smoother to driver. In these tough time, it also slightly increases the miles-per-gallon!

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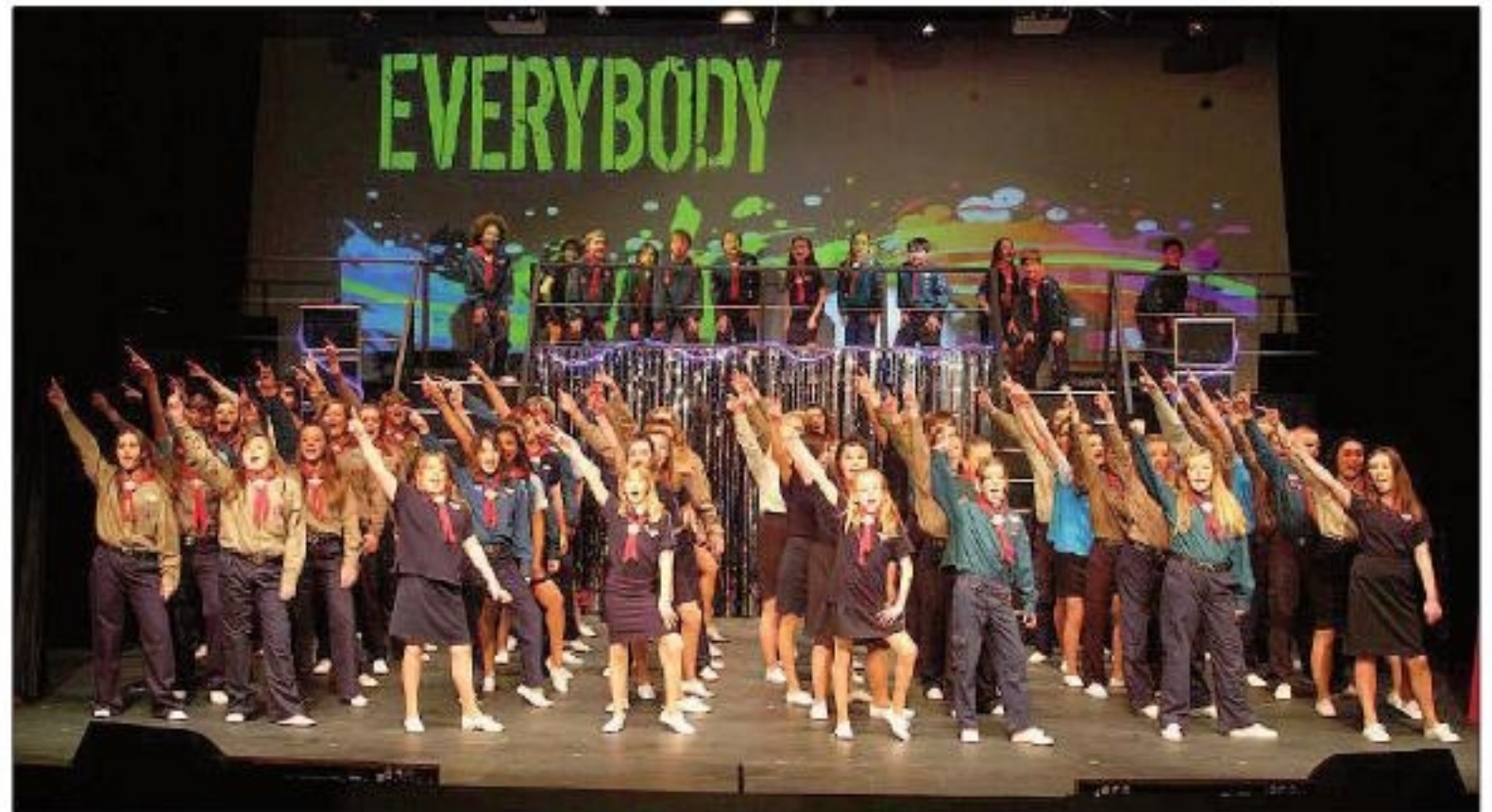
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Rounding up all the Gang!



• The team behind this year's Gang Show want it to be "truly amazing" (Pictures courtesy of BGS)

ORGANISERS are hard at work getting together this year's Basingstoke Gang Show (BGS), now held every two years.

Tickets are on sale for the nine-day extravaganza, the 21st since its inauguration in 1980.

The show is made up of around 70 cubs, scouts, guides, explorers and young leaders from in and around the Basingstoke area.

Chairman of the BGS, Steve Edney, wants this year's show to be "truly amazing".

"Our dynamic cast has been busy rehearsing since September, learning lyrics, dance moves and key lines for the comedy sketches. There has also been a small army of volunteers working behind the scenes in production, scenery and wardrobe," he said.

By James Booker

news@basingstokeobserver.co.uk

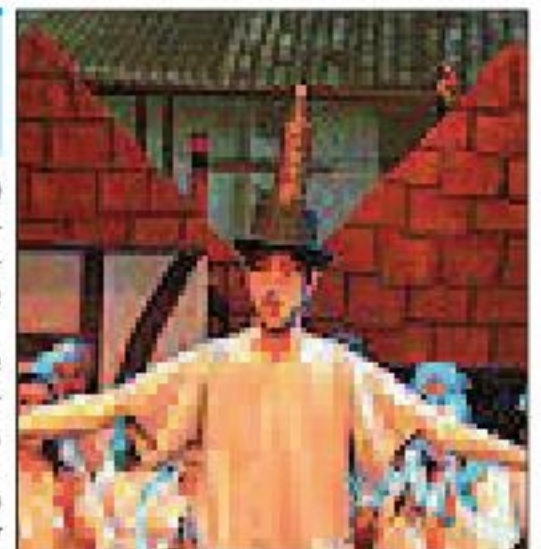
"The cost of the show is £50,000 and is an entirely self-funded production managed by a team of dedicated volunteers who have made this performance possible."

"I would like to thank everyone who has volunteered for Basingstoke Gang Show 2014 for their time, support and never ending energy!"

"Our aim is to enable the cast to reach their full potential, as they develop their self-confidence, self-discipline, teamwork and trust, as well as make friends for life through a truly amazing shared experience."

Producer Julie Allen added: "We promise to give you a night to remember at our grand slamming show."

"So don't stop believing and join us on this miraculous journey through the magic of movies, the music of



Motown, making 'em laugh and so much more.

"Basingstoke Gang Show is produced entirely by an army of volunteers all of whom I would like to personally thank for the many hours of hard work they have dedicated towards our show, enabling our cast to perform to the best of their ability at the same time as making lifelong memories and friendships."



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News Bites

Quartet charged

TWO men, a woman and a boy have been charged in connection with the supply of class A drugs as part of Operation Fortress.

A 20-year-old man has been remanded in custody while a 16-year-old boy has been released into the care of the local authority.

The woman, aged 36, and a 48-year-old man were released on bail.

They are all due to appear at Winchester Crown Court on January 15.

Did you see them?

A WHITE Voodoo mountain bike was stolen from Tempus Business Park on December 23.

Three men were seen pulling up in a curtain sided van at around 1.35pm and two of them removed the bike from a cycle rack and put it in the rear of the vehicle.

Anyone with information should contact PC Glenn Spierling on 101.

Woman injured

A WOMAN was left with serious injuries after a crash in Whitchurch on Sunday.

The 27-year-old was taken to Southampton General Hospital after the incident on Cole Henley Road from Whitchurch to Kingsclere at around 3.45pm.

The car she was driving, a silver Nissan Micra, left the road and collided with hedges.

There were no other vehicles involved. Anyone with information should call 101, and quote Operation Hattora.

Get signed up for Basingstoke Festival!

BASINGSTOKE'S artists, groups and performers are being encouraged to show off their skills and sign up for this year's arts festival.

This year's festival, now in its third year, will take place between June 20 and July 13.

Last year, the festival increased the number of venues to nearly 40, and more than 100 events were co-ordinated by Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council (BDBC) across the borough.

And organisers hope 2014's event will be the biggest one yet.

Basingstoke Festival aims to bring together an energetic mix of quality events for all ages. Everything from comedy, music or dance to art and craft exhibitions and workshops will be considered as part of the programme.

This year, organisers are keen to see more contributions from rural parts of the borough to, they say, make the festival a true representation of grassroots arts and performance, in a similar vein to the successful Scarecrow Festival staged in Overton last year.

Registration is free and, if accepted into the festival programme, events will receive all the benefits of being part of a flagship festival, including online marketing and inclusion

By James Booker

news@basingstokeobserver.co.uk

in a programme distributed free to 12,000 people.

BDBC's cabinet member for Partnerships, Cllr Cathy Osselton, is completely behind the festival.

She said: "Basingstoke Festival is becoming known as a brilliant showcase for arts and performance across the borough.

"It also has the full involvement of our emerging home grown talent and community-based groups.

"This year we have an opportunity to build on the successes of the past two festivals and consolidate Basingstoke Festival as an essential calendar date for both locals and visitors, and as a celebration of performance of all types in Basingstoke and Deane."

"I'm looking forward to seeing what exciting events are being planned and encourage groups and venues to sign up to get these performances across to a wider audience."

For more information, visit www.basingstokefestival.co.uk, or call 01256 844844.

You can also follow the event on Twitter @BstokeFestival or Like the event on Facebook.

Police are hunting this man after assault on teenage girl



POLICE in Basingstoke have issued an efit of a man they want to speak to in connection with an assault on a teenage girl on New Year's Day.

The 18-year-old was walking through an underpass on Clid-desden Road at 11am, when she was grabbed from behind and pushed to the floor.

After getting up, she was then pushed against a wall.

The man then ran off in the direction of the town centre.

The offender is described as of oriental appearance, in his early 20s and about 5ft 5ins tall.

He is of slim build, and was wearing dark blue baggy jeans and a black hoodie.

Detective Constable Rod Kenny from Basingstoke CID said: "I would like to hear from anyone who was in the area at the time of the incident and may have seen suspect or the victim."

"I'd also like anyone who recognises the efit image to contact the police."

• Do you recognise this man?



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Odiham store in £10k charity grant scheme

THE Southern Co-operative's Odiham store is inviting bids from local charities and good causes to receive a donation of up to £10,000 from its 2014 Community Support Card (CSC) scheme.

The CSC scheme, which is run in selected food stores across the south each year, is driven by customers.

However, it does not cost shoppers anything to support the scheme.

Retail business manager at its Odiham store, James Knott, explained: "Our CSC scheme is a great way for local charities and organisations to raise thousands of pounds with the backing of our customers."

"Local good causes need to complete an application form by February 15, which they can pick up here at the store."

"The scheme's recipients are then chosen by a panel made up of members of The Southern Co-operative who live locally, and the team here at the store."

"We believe that local people know best what will benefit the community most."

"We'll launch the scheme, which runs for up to one year,

By James Booker

news@basingstokeobserver.co.uk

with a free party in the community.

"Customers can show their support simply by requesting a green CSC card, which we issue free in the store, and having this swiped every time they shop here."

"The more cards are swiped, the quicker The Southern Co-operative donates towards the £10,000 total available; it's that simple."

Last July, The Southern Co-operative donated £3,000 each to North Warnborough Community Football Support Association and the Jack Bland Memorial Fund from its 2012/13 Community Support Card scheme.

James added: "As a co-operative, supporting our local community is key to our ethos and business success."

"The support we get here in Odiham is usually really good for our fundraising campaigns, so I would urge local good causes and charities to call into the store and apply for this £10,000 scheme."

Dee assumes position as Hants rural chief



• Dee Haas

A BASINGSTOKE woman has taken over as head of the county's Campaign to Protect Rural England group.

Dee Haas, who lives in Ellistfield, takes over as chair from Peter Bedford, who will continue to head the North Hampshire

District branch.

"I have been very taken with the wealth of expertise existing in our voluntary and paid members and the way that they can respond quickly to help people in their campaigns," she said.

"The supportive, educational

planning workshops are very helpful and I love the programme of visits and activities."

"The Countryside Awards scheme is a great asset to the charity and its corporate supporters, so I would like to see that developing in the future."

News Bites

Did you witness this car theft?

POLICE are appealing for witnesses after a car was stolen during a burglary in Basingstoke.

Offenders entered a property on Raphael Close between 5.30pm on December 29 and 7.20am on December 30 and stole the keys to a black Ford Focus Zetec S.

Anyone with information should contact PC Lisa Cooper on 101.

Cops appeal after theft in Overton

JEWELLERY was stolen from a home in Overton during the afternoon of December 19.

The offender forced their way into a house on Elm Road between 1pm and 5.30pm.

Police would now like to hear from anyone who was in the area at the time and who saw anything out of the ordinary. Call 101.

Burglary injury

A MAN is believed to have injured himself during the attempted burglary of a house in Burghclere.

Windows were smashed to a house on Ox Drive between 11am on December 27 and 11am on January 1 but entry was not gained.

Police would like anyone who saw a man with injuries to call 101.

Do you have a story to share with our readers?

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safe and comfortable setting.

St Thomas' is also proud to be a Memory Lane community where people with dementia live in a supportive environment with highly-trained staff. Complete with en-suite bedrooms, St Thomas' provides nursing dementia care for its residents in a sympathetically converted former Victorian home. It's beautiful Grade II listed chapel

can be seen from Darlington Road just around the corner from the Vyne School.

St Thomas has recently developed a new wing dedicated purely to caring for people with the early stages of dementia and elderly nursing care. The Honeysuckle Wing offers attractive en-suite bedrooms, bright living areas and the full support of our

experienced 24hr care team.

St Thomas' has a beautiful sensory garden and four other courtyard and activities gardens for residents' enjoyment. The central garden is accessible from all sides of the home and offers a safe environment for residents to enjoy outdoor sights, sounds and smells. Other facilities in the home include life-skills kitchens, where people can experience the familiarity of everyday household tasks. And we even have pets including a rabbit, Smudge the cat and an aviary with quails and cockatiels. By participating in meaningful activities, such as gardening, baking and pet care, the residents feel at the home

are engaged and stimulated throughout the day.

Skilled activities co-ordinators work alongside residents to create lively and involving programmes for everyone's enjoyment.

In March this year, St Thomas' celebrated its 10th anniversary as a Barchester Healthcare home with a medieval night that was held in the chapel, raising more than £250 for The Alzheimer's Society.

With its fascinating history, St Thomas is bursting with charm and now provides residents with the modern facilities of a first class dementia nursing home on Basingstoke's doorstep. We welcome you and your family to come and visit us one day soon.



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and about our short-term breaks.

Venita Couzens Home Manager

St Thomas Care Home
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Images released of £8k stolen jewellery



PHOTOS have been released of £8,000 worth of jewellery which was stolen during a burglary in Basingstoke.

Between 10am and midnight on December 17, offenders broke into a house on Elmwood Way in Winklebury.

By Jack Johnson

news@basingstokeobserver.co.uk

Once inside the property they took a large amount of jewellery which officers say is worth

around £8,000.

Large gold bangles, two gold chains with religious medallions, a titanium wedding ring, a white and gold half eternity ring, gold earrings with a centre sapphire, gold chain with a religious pendant and a titanium

engagement ring were taken.

Various electrical items were also stolen during the burglary.

PC Thomas Prutz said: "I would like to hear from anyone who saw anything suspicious in the area during this incident and

would also ask anyone who has been offered jewellery for sale, or who recognises the photographed items, to contact me."

Anyone with information should contact PC Prutz on 101 or call Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111.

Rural areas must stay vigilant...

RURAL homeowners on oil-fired central heating are being reminded about the risk of thefts and the importance of staying vigilant during January and February.

A National Farmers Union Rural Crime survey showed that fuel was the third most attractive commodity for thieves targeting properties in the countryside.

This, coupled with more severe cold weather and increasing oil prices likely in the coming months, makes heating oil prone to theft.

Malcolm Farrow, from the Oil Firing Technical Association (OFTEC), said: "This is an issue that we can't stress enough at this time of year as no one wants to run out of oil and risk going cold."

"If more people are aware and vigilant of oil thefts in rural communities, hopefully there will be fewer victims of this crime. January and February often brings the harshest weather and this, combined with people feeling the pinch after Christmas, can make the early new year a popular time for thieves to strike."

Insp Paul Pressley from Hampshire Constabulary, added: "Heating oil theft is a regular problem in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, particularly in rural locations."

"The effect of this crime on victims is both costly and inconvenient, so it really is beneficial to be proactive."

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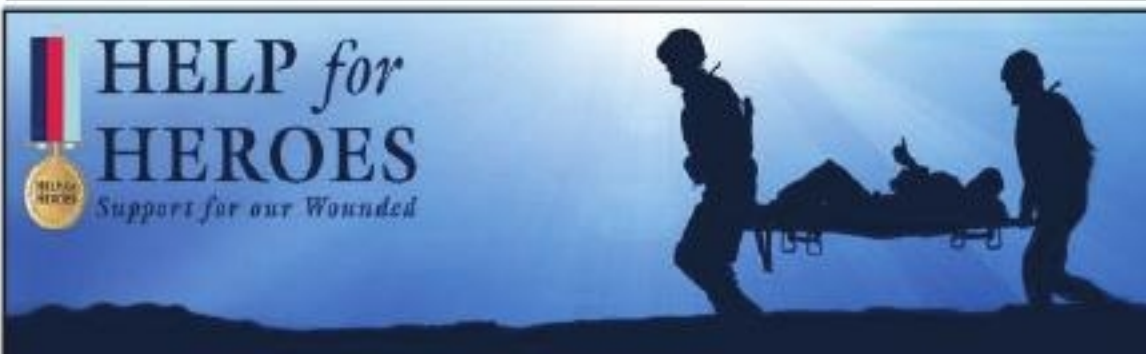
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Entertainment

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Haymarket reveals more 2014 shows

LIVE music, comedy and theatre make up the agenda at Basingstoke's Haymarket theatre, as shows for the first few months of the year are revealed.

Local boyband Concept get the

year underway on January 17 with their second hometown concert, following on from a busy two years where they have supported Example, Chase and Status and Diversity among others.

Original and long-term mem-

bers of The Kinks get back together in their new show Kast Off Kinks, including Ian Gibbons, John Dalton and David Clarke.

Stand-up comic Hal Cruttenden brings his Tough Luvvie tour to Basingstoke, following on from his appearance on John Bishop's 'Only Joking' and the production of two sitcoms.

February starts with Consider Yourself at Home, an evening with stage and screen stars Ron Moody and Mark Lester as both discuss their extensive careers.

The story of a famous murder is performed in Ladies in Retirement, set in the late 19th century, in one of the most frequently performed plays in recent years.

Basingstoke's Gang Show starts at The Haymarket on February 13, with a cast of 70 talented Scouts and Guides who perform a packed evening of song and dance.

Roger Llewellyn returns to Basingstoke as Sherlock Holmes in his most complex case yet,

By Adam Flinn

adam@taylornewspapers.co.uk

as he battles his own psyche in what is Holmes' 'last act' in his career.

Children's theatre comes to The Haymarket at the start of March with Charlie and Lola's Extremely New Play, featuring a blend of puppets, live action and music written especially for youngsters.

And host of hit television series River Monsters Jeremy Wade will be in Basingstoke on March 13.

Jeremy will be speaking about man-sized piranhas, electrocuting fish and nine-foot river sharks.

Full details for any of The Haymarket's shows, along with booking information and ticket prices, can be found at www.anvilarts.org.uk.

You can also find out by calling 01256 844244.



Comedian Hal Cruttenden's new show is on January 30



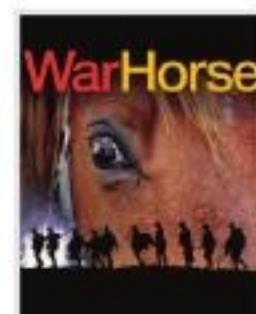
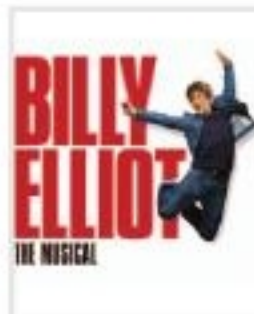
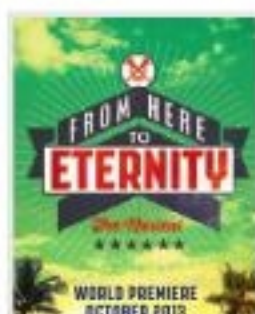
Basingstoke boyband Concept perform on January 17 and 18

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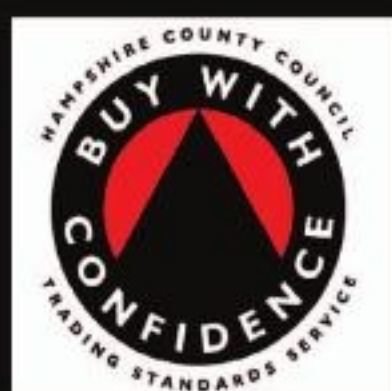
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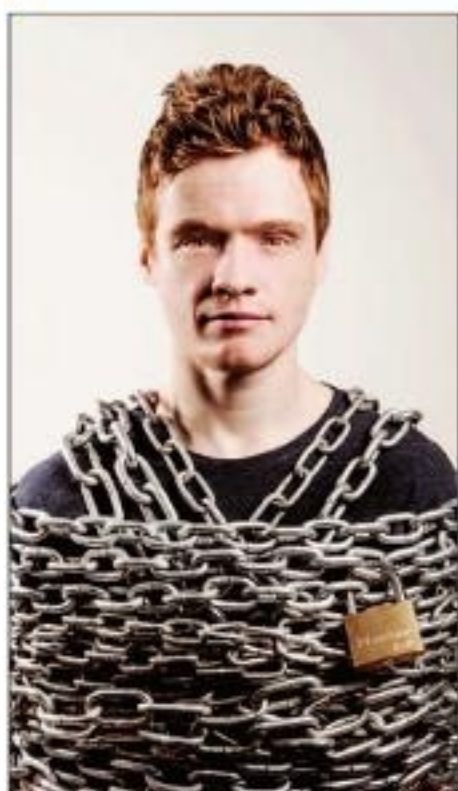
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Entertainment

Welcome to our Entertainments page where we are showcasing all that is good in local entertainment ranging from professional to amateur acts. If you would like your event considered for publication please contact reporter Adam Flinn at adam@taylornewspapers.co.uk or telephone 01235 516933



Variety on the Phoenix bill

COMEDY, theatre and music are all on the agenda at the Bordon Phoenix in the New Year, with a number of shows having been announced for January, February and March.

The Phoenix Players start proceedings on January 16 with their winter pantomime *The*

By Adam Flinn

adam@taylornewspapers.co.uk

Snow Queen, based on the Hans Christian Anderson fairytale of the same name.

Anne of Green Gables is staged at the end of the month, telling the story of the young, lost Anne as she arrives in Avonlea and is mistakenly sent for adoption.

The Phoenix Comedy Club returns on February 6 to offer up-and-coming comics a chance on the big stage, this time featuring Andrew Bird, James Sherwood, Matt Price and compere Dan Evans.

More stand-up comedy follows the following week, as Live at the Apollo star Andrew Lawrence presents his new show 'There is no escape' with all new material.

There's a Monster in my Piano gets March underway, with the

children's theatre show following a piano doctor, as he seeks to find out why the musical notes are running away.

Edinburgh-based six-piece string band Southern Tenant Folk Union come to Bordon on March 8, and will perform their take on roots and folk music.

Comedian Joel Dommert is back with his new show, coming after rave reviews he gained for his debut solo act Neon Hero in 2011.

Also back on tour is Patrick Monahan with his new show 'Cake Charmer', as the Tees-sider brings his blend of anecdotes, charm and brand of humour to North Hampshire.

As well as stage shows, the Bordon Phoenix is also showing a number of films throughout the year, with *Behind the Candelabra*, *Rush* and *Philomena* being screened before the end of March.

For details, call 01420 472664.



• (Top) Comedian Andrew Lawrence's new show is on February 15 - (Bottom) Southern Tenant Folk Union perform on March 8

• There's a Monster in my Piano takes place on March 1

Basingstoke
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PRICE INCLUDES:

- Return flight from London Heathrow airport to Boston¹
- 4 nights stay at the Best Western Royal Plaza hotel, Marlborough with breakfast
- 2 nights stay at the Ogunquit River Plantation hotel, Maine with breakfast
- 3 nights stay at the Holiday Inn Rutland, Vermont with breakfast

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£1499pp

Option Two

25 September - 5 October 2014 and 9 - 19 October 2014

Visiting Cape Cod, the Island of Martha's Vineyard, the Pilgrim town of Plymouth (and the Plimoth Plantation), Boston, the battlefields of Lexington, Salem, Newport (Rhode Island), New Hampshire, Vermont and Stowe.

PRICE INCLUDES:

- Return flight from London Heathrow airport to Boston¹
- 3 nights stay at the Resort and Conference Center, Hyannis with breakfast
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¹We have included a reasonable budget for your flights. Should the cost of these flights be above this amount we will amend the holiday cost to reflect these changes and therefore the price may increase or decrease accordingly. The final price will be confirmed at the time of booking. The advertised prices are correct as of 27/12/13 and based upon departure from Heathrow airport on 25/9/14.

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Entertainment

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01235 511700. To place a free event listing
email the details to
whatson@basingstokeobserver.co.uk

8 January, 7:30pm - 9pm

St Marks School DITCH THE DIET - FREE SEMINAR

The only all female weight loss group that helps you take back control over your health and your weight.

Free Seminars being held;
• Wednesday 8th January 7:30pm
St Marks School

• Saturday 11th January 10:30am
Preston Candover Village Hall
Come hear about how you can be the best you can be.

No points, no colours, no shakes and no more yo yo.
Lets Ditch The Diets Together
www.youtube.com/watch?v=oFQteqdkb2M
07872 967812

11 January, 7:30pm - 11:45pm

Crown Lane, Old Basing RECORD HOP NIGHT WITH DJ STOMPIN' STEVE

£5 on the door
7904931161

12 January, 2:30pm

Brookvale Village Hall, Basingstoke, 'ALICE IN WONDERLAND' PROTEUS PANTO

£8 per ticket, £7 concessions, child £5, family £6 pp (Min 3, max 6 people) under 2 free Call Pam 01256 324313 or email pam.mansfield@brookvale.org.uk

14 January - 25 March, 7pm - 9pm

Everest Community Academy, Oxford Way, Basingstoke RG24 9UP AUTHENTIC INDIAN COOKERY COURSE

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7941554108

15 January, 7:45pm

The Anvil LONDON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

01256 844244
www.anvilarts.org.uk

15 January, 7:45pm

The Anvil LONDON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA.

01256 844244 www.anvilarts.org.uk

17 January, 7:30pm

Central Studio Queen Mary's College

ACOUSTIC OPEN MIC NIGHT FREE

Come along to play or just come to hear some of the most talented musicians in Basingstoke. Everybody welcome, from professionals to first time performers.

Bar & free parking available.
www.centralstudio.co.uk

17 January, 7:45pm

The Anvil JOHANN STRAUSS GALA A VIENNESE PARTY

Starring irrepressible showman and conductor Rainer Hersch, who takes you on a light-hearted journey through a fizzing assortment of music and dance.

Dancers twirl and whirl in graceful unison with billowing gowns and distinctive elegance.

The Blue Danube Waltz, Radetzky March, Emperor Waltz, Lucifer Polka Perpetuum Mobile, Il Bacio The Kiss plus many more of your favourite waltzes and polkas from the Strauss family and friends.

Featuring sparkling soprano Kristy Swift, Johann Strauss Dancers in glorious costumes of the period and the Johann Strauss Orchestra.
01256 844244 www.anvilarts.org.uk

21 January,

Phoenix Theatre Bordon OMID DJALILI LIVE

01420 472664

24 January, 7:45pm

The Anvil LET'S HANG ON

A musical journey through the prolific career of one of the most successful bands of all time - Frankie Valli & The Four Seasons. From their beginnings in the early 50s, the show takes you through hits such as Beggin, Grease, Bye Bye Baby, Sherry, Rag Doll, Take My Eyes Off You, December 1963 (Oh What a Night!), Working My Way Back To You, Walk Like A Man, Big Girls Dont Cry, and many more, climaxing with a spectacular finale featuring, of course, Let's Hang On!

Definitely not a night to be missed!
TICKETS: £21
01256 844244 www.anvilarts.org.uk

25 January, 11am

Central Studio Queen Mary's College

THE SNOW QUEEN

£6 full, £5 children
With beautifully crafted songs, this Anderson tale will delight and enthrall all who watch.

From the Sorcerer who creates the mirror that distorts people's stare, to the path of true love that Gerda shows Kay.
www.centralstudio.co.uk

25 January, 11am

Central Studio Queen Mary's College

THE GOLDEN PRINCESS

Melo, the strange, one legged musician, sits alone by the sea, content in his world and playing the most beautiful music.

But who comes here?
£6 full, £5 children
www.centralstudio.co.uk

25 January, 7:45pm

The Anvil PHILHARMONIA ORCHESTRA

01256 844244 www.anvilarts.org.uk

25 January, 7:30pm

The Haymarket

THE KAST OFF KINKS

01256 844244 www.anvilarts.org.uk

25 January, 7:45pm

The Anvil

PHILHARMONIA ORCHESTRA

01256 844244 www.anvilarts.org.uk

25 January, 7:30pm

The Haymarket

THE KAST OFF KINKS

01256 844244 www.anvilarts.org.uk

30 January, 7:30pm

The Haymarket

HAL CRUTTENDEN

01256 844244 www.anvilarts.org.uk

30 January, 7:30pm

The Haymarket

HAL CRUTTENDEN

Hal's comedy is warm and catty, straight and camp - it's a lovely mix

that has made him a regular guest on John Bishop's Only Joking (Sky1), and led to not one, but two sitcoms being produced this year.
01256 844244 www.anvilarts.org.uk

31 January, 7:30pm

Central Studio Queen Mary's College

SEAN HUGHES

~£15 full | ~£13 concession
The award winning comedian, writer and actor Sean Hughes presents his latest gem Penguins. Career guidance teachers, an angry monk, older brothers to losing his virginity - it's all there. You'll leave uplifted! It's a total joy.
www.centralstudio.co.uk

31 January - 1 February,

Silchester Village Hall

ALI BABA AND THE FORTY THIEVES - PANTOMIME

www.silchesterplayers.hampshire.org.uk

31 January, 8pm

The Forge

THE WILL POUND BAND

Tickets: £14.50; over 65s, under 16s & f/t students £12.50 ticket prices include £1 booking fee
01256 844244 www.anvilarts.org.uk

31 January, 7:45pm

The Anvil

THATLL BE THE DAY

01256 844244 www.anvilarts.org.uk

31 January, 8pm

The Forge

THE WILL POUND BAND

01256 844244 www.anvilarts.org.uk

2 February, 7:30pm

The Haymarket

CONSIDER YOURSELF AT HOME

01256 844244 www.anvilarts.org.uk

7 February, 7:30pm

Central Studio Queen Mary's College

MILES JUPP

Tickets: ~£15

Miles Jupp - actor, writer and comedian will be discussing/ranting/describing: himself, you, domestic imprisonment, fatherhood, having to have opinions, hot drinks, the bloody government, bad balance, housing, ill health, the ageing process, navigation, other people's pants and, inevitably, a number of other things.
www.centralstudio.co.uk

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Hal Cruttenden
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Sudoku

Place a number from 1 to 9 in each empty cell so that each 3x3 block, column, and full row includes each of the numbers from 1 to 9 only once. **EASY/MEDIUM/HARD**

		8	6			1		5
9			8		2	7		
6		4	7	9			2	
	7			8	5		4	1
	4	9				5	3	
	1		9	4			8	
				1	8	4		9
1		5			9	2		

5								8
6	3						2	9
	9		2		7		4	
		4	7	5	3	2		
		5	8	6	1	9		
	1		4		9		6	
3	2						8	1
4								2

2							3	8
		6		1				9
					7		6	
		8		6		2		
			7		5			
		5		3		4		
	7		5					
9				2		6		
3	8							1

Two speed crossword

Quick Clues Across

- 4 Crustacean (6)
- 8 Religious buildings (7)
- 9 Discover the position of (6)
- 10 Vessel for conveying passengers and vehicles (5,4)
- 11 Disorder (4)
- 13 Halts (5)
- 14 Swift retort (7)
- 16 Be gluttonous (7)
- 18 Goods (5)
- 19 Unwoven fabric (4)
- 21 Indispensable (9)
- 22 Kind of chicory (6)
- 23 Began (7)
- 24 Short track for shunting (6)

Quick Clues Down

- 1 Misleading (9)
- 2 Part for replacement in machinery (5,4)
- 3 Medicinal plants (5)
- 5 Shout derisively (4)
- 6 Representations (6)
- 7 Gratify (6)
- 9 Classical language (5)
- 11 Religious house (9)
- 12 Became dull (9)
- 15 Lift (5)
- 16 Proposals (6)
- 17 Baffled (6)
- 20 Relaxes (5)
- 21 Flat (4)
- 22 After due or usual time (4)

Cryptic Clues Across

- 4 Change the hair piece (6)
- 8 Told of formerly being in the red (7)
- 9 The cure is a change of a holiday (6)
- 10 Somehow I also turn it on as being separate (9)
- 11 The Republicans hold part of this place (4)
- 13 Wounds the sailor in the streets (5)
- 14 Confused at finding birds in part of the garden (7)
- 16 Mean to put Vera in a time bracket (7)
- 18 Could nothing be so changed among the reeds? (5)
- 19 Begin to direct (4)
- 21 Meet and go in to find a conscientious objector to the UN inside (9)
- 22 Group which is more than healthy (6)
- 23 Take away from the retiring editor's paper (7)
- 24 Herbs for sound occasions (6)

Cryptic Clues Down

- 1 Is the visit seen to show feeling? (9)
- 2 Ore who sacrifices sleep to capture a contemptible creature (5,4)
- 3 The department has an hour to make the distance (5)
- 5 Give notice of a battle to the north (4)
- 6 Tries to absorb second-rate groups (6)
- 7 Having the money to visit the cobbler? (6)
- 9 Centres of sound reason (5)
- 11 But surely it's the wife who shows careful domestic management? (9)
- 12 Adoring bow (9)
- 15 Spy factor (5)
- 16 Very nearly to slam out (6)
- 17 Heed your fundamental quality (6)
- 20 Is there a large number over its white cliffs? (5)
- 21 A great lake turns to Ireland (4)

	1		2		3		4	5		6		7
8												
							9					
10												
									11		12	
13							14					
					15							
16		17							18			
19									20			
					21							
22												
							23					
24												

Scribble space

Last week's solutions

9	3	4	5	6	1	8	2	7
6	2	8	9	3	7	4	1	5
1	7	5	8	2	4	6	9	3
2	9	3	1	5	8	7	6	4
7	5	1	2	4	6	3	8	9
4	8	6	7	9	3	1	5	2
5	1	7	4	8	9	2	3	6
3	4	2	6	1	5	9	7	8
8	6	9	3	7	2	5	4	1

2	5	4	1	9	8	6	3	7
9	1	7	5	3	6	8	2	4
6	3	8	2	4	7	9	1	5
4	9	1	7	6	5	3	8	2
8	7	6	3	2	1	5	4	9
5	2	3	9	8	4	7	6	1
3	4	9	8	7	2	1	5	6
1	8	2	6	5	9	4	7	3
7	6	5	4	1	3	2	9	8

6	2	5	7	1	3	8	4	9
9	4	3	6	2	8	1	7	5
8	1	7	9	4	5	2	6	3
3	7	4	5	8	2	6	9	1
2	8	1	3	9	6	7	5	4
5	9	6	1	7	4	3	8	2
7	5	2	4	6	1	9	3	8
4	6	8	2	3	9	5	1	7
1	3	9	8	5	7	4	2	6

Quick Crossword

Across: 1 Symbolic 4 Apes 8 Inroad 10 Banana
11 Queen 12 Revue 14 Aerial 17 Re-elected 18 Vanishing
22 Smiles 23 Essay 24 Steal 26 Splits 27 Damask
28 Sate 29 Handlers

Down: 1 Spin 2 Murder 3 Opaque 5 Placid 6 Smallest
7 Manet 9 Duellists 10 Beachhead 13 Venal 15 Reins
16 Persists 18 Violet 19 Nests 20 Island 21 Garage 25 Skis

Cryptic Crossword

Across: 1 Officers 4 Keep 8 Ballad 10 Rescue 11 Sited 12
Fires 14 Castle 17 Perchance 18 Recoiling 22 Abacus 23
Inter 24 Beans 26 Nailed 27 George 28 Yule 29 Ebb tides
Down: 1 Orbs 2 Filip 3 Chaser 5 Excite 6 Presence
7 Sedan 9 Disclosed 10 Recalling 13 Rebec 15 Scant
16 Ungainly 18 Radial 19 Cubes 20 Insect 21 Geared 25 Bets



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The award-winning production Let's Hang On comes to The Anvil on Friday 24 January at 7.45pm.

The show takes you on a musical journey through the prolific career of one of the most successful bands of all time - Frankie Valli and The Four Seasons.

This is your chance to discover how four New Jersey boys from the wrong side of the tracks invented their own sound, wrote their own songs and became one of the biggest pop sensations of all time.

From their beginnings in the early 50s, the show takes you through hits such as 'Beggin', 'Grease, Bye Bye Baby, Sherry, Rag Doll, Take My Eye Off You, December 1963 (Oh What a

Closing date:
Tuesday, January 21

Night!), Working My Way Back To You, Walk Like A Man, Big Girls Don't Cry and many more climaxing with a spectacular finale featuring, of course, Let's Hang On.

The story...the music...the sound... Let's Hang On gives you it all in this remarkable live production, so book your tickets now and find out why audiences are leaving saying... "oh what a night!"

All tickets for Let's Hang On are priced £21 (includes £1 booking fee). For more information

or for tickets, call the Anvil Arts box office on 01256 844244. Or use the Anvil Arts website www.anvilarts.org.uk.

We have 2 pairs of tickets to give away for this great night out. To be in with a chance of winning one of these pairs all you have to do is answer this simple question:

Q: FROM WHICH US STATE DID FRANKIE VALLI AND THE FOUR SEASONS HAIL?

LET'S HANG ON

THE WORLD'S NO.1 TRIBUTE TO FRANKIE VALLI AND THE FOUR SEASONS

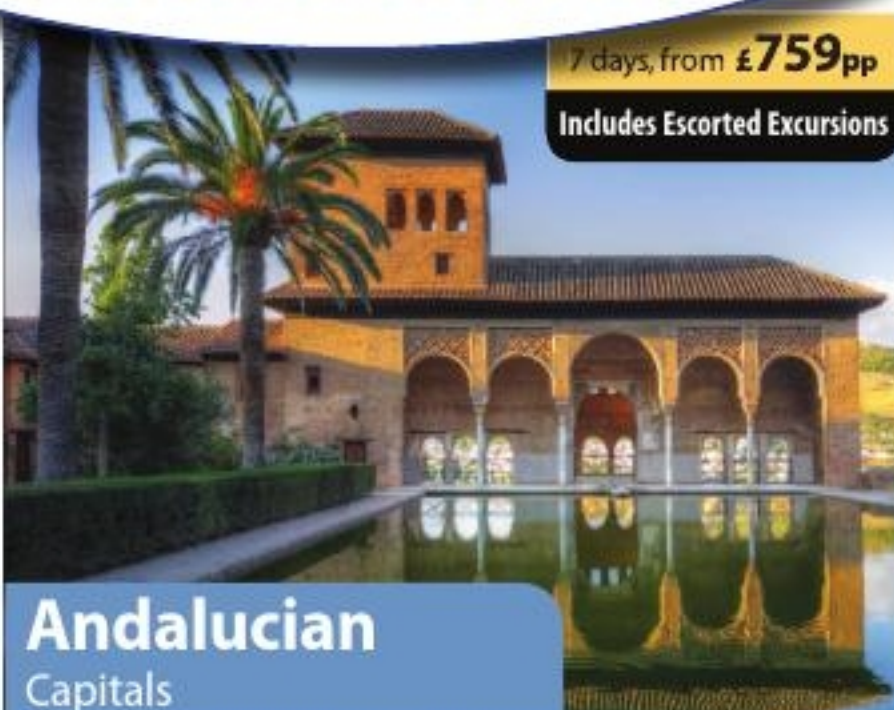


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- Return flight from Gatwick airport to Malaga[†]
- Airport taxes & return transfer from the airport to your hotel
- 6 nights stay at the 4 star Hotel Antequera Golf, Antequera with dinner & breakfast
- A guided tour of the Great Mosque of Cordoba (Mezquita)
- Admission to the Alhambra Palace & the Generalife in Granada
- Includes 3 excursions; to Cordoba, Granada & Seville

[†] We have included a reasonable budget for your flights. Should the cost of these fall below or rise above this amount we will amend the holiday cost to reflect these changes and therefore the price may increase or decrease accordingly. The final price will be confirmed at the time of booking. The advertised price is correct as of 27 December 2013 and is based upon departure from Gatwick airport on 12 June 2014.



8 days, from **£689pp**

Includes Escorted Excursions

Barcelona and Catalonia

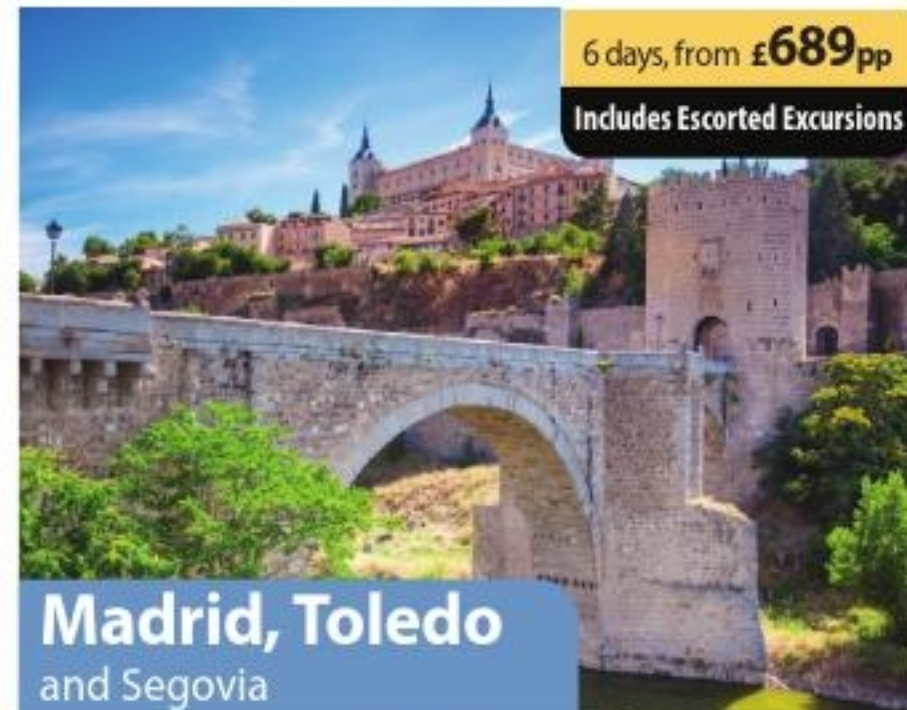
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From Gatwick airport

From Gothic to Gaudi, the ramblas to the champlas, in Barcelona there is artistry on every street corner. We'll take you to Montserrat and the Black Madonna, Figueres and the Dalí Museum, La Garrotxa with its volcanic gorges, and eleventh century Besalú with its Jewish quarter. All this, and you've still got time to stroll on the beach at Calella on the Costa Brava, visit a wine cava, and the markets at La Boqueria, or just relax in 4-star style.

Price includes:

- Return flight from Gatwick airport to Barcelona^{††}
- Airport taxes and return transfer from the airport to your hotel
- 7 nights stay in 4 star Hotel Les Palmeres, Calella with dinner & breakfast
- Includes 3 full day excursions; to Barcelona including guided walking tour of the old town, Montserrat and Figueres with admission to the Dalí Museum

^{††} We have included a reasonable budget for your flights. Should the cost of these fall below or rise above this amount we will amend the holiday cost to reflect these changes and therefore the price may increase or decrease accordingly. The final price will be confirmed at the time of booking. The advertised price is correct as of 27 December 2013.



6 days, from **£689pp**

Includes Escorted Excursions

Madrid, Toledo and Segovia

Departing Thursday 15 May 2014
From Gatwick airport

Discover a warm welcome in magnificent Madrid with its wonderful collections of art, stunning architecture and impeccable parks and gardens. Add to the mix a feast of fine eateries and you have a holiday to remember!

Price includes:

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- 5 nights stay at the 3 star Hotel Ganivet, Madrid, with breakfast
- Three buffet dinners
- Included panoramic coach tour and a guided walking tour of the historical centre of Madrid
- Included excursions to Toledo and Segovia
- Free time in Madrid

^{†††} We have included a reasonable budget for your flights. Should the cost of these fall below or rise above this amount we will amend the holiday cost to reflect these changes and therefore the price may increase or decrease accordingly. The final price will be confirmed at the time of booking. The advertised price is correct as of 27 December 2013.

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European Holidays by Air

Diano Marina

& the Riviera of Flowers



Saturday departures, 7 June and 6 September 2014
From Gatwick airport

Imagine a backdrop of hills clad in olive groves and pine, lemon and orange trees leading down to picturesque coves, splendid beaches, and the hinterland blazing with the exotic flowering blooms from which the Italian Riviera of Flowers gets its name. ... savour delightful Diano Marina on this great-value holiday with a quality hotel and two fully-escorted excursions.

Price includes:

- Return flight from Gatwick airport to Nice^{†††}
- Airport taxes and return transfer from the airport to your hotel
- 7 nights stay at the 3 star Hotel Arc en Ciel, Diano Marina with dinner & breakfast
- An upgrade to the 4 star Hotel Metropol, Diano Marina is offered, subject to availability, at a supplement
- Includes 2 full day excursions; to Santa Margherita & Portofino and Monaco & Monte Carlo

Includes
Escorted Excursions

8 days by AIR, from
£869pp

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Dubrovnik

The Pearl of the Adriatic



Sunday departures, 4, 11 & 18 May and 12 & 19 October 2014
From Gatwick airport

The magnificent old walled city of Dubrovnik is steeped in historical, architectural and artistic treasures boasting spectacular Gothic, Renaissance and Baroque churches, monasteries, palaces and fountains. Set against a backdrop of wooded hillsides and with stunning views of the Dalmatian coastline, it is easy to see why George Bernard Shaw thought idyllic Dubrovnik was quite simply "Paradise on Earth".

Price includes:

- Return flight from Gatwick airport to Dubrovnik^{††††}
- Airport taxes and return transfer from the airport to your hotel
- 7 nights stay at the 4 star Grand Hotel Park, Dubrovnik with dinner & breakfast
- Includes 2 full day excursions; to the island of Korčula and a cruise around the Elaphite Islands

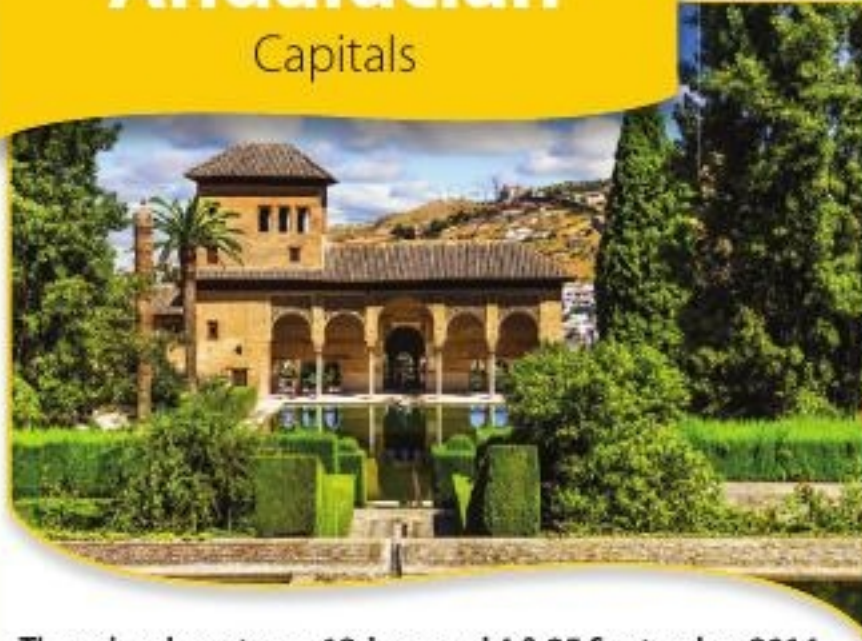
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Andalucian

Capitals



Thursday departures, 12 June and 4 & 25 September 2014
From Gatwick airport

Just across the Strait of Gibraltar from Morocco, Andalusia is simply one of the most beautiful and unspoilt corners of Europe. Its stunning cities are steeped in history with a culture influenced by the Moors and the Romans which is enriched by the greatly contrasting surrounding landscape.

Price includes:

- Return flight from Gatwick airport to Malaga^{††††}
- Airport taxes & return transfer from the airport to your hotel
- 6 nights stay at the 4 star Hotel Antequera Golf, Antequera with dinner & breakfast
- A guided tour of the Great Mosque of Cordoba (Mezquita)
- Admission to the Alhambra Palace & the Generalife in Granada
- Includes 3 excursions; to Cordoba, Granada & Seville

Includes
Escorted Excursions

7 days by AIR, from
£759pp

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Imperial Cities



Departing Thursday 7 August 2014
From Gatwick airport

- Return flights from Gatwick airport^{†††††}; outbound to Prague and return from Budapest
- Return airport-hotel-airport transfer
- Coach transfer from Prague to Vienna, and transfer by train from Vienna to Budapest
- 3 nights' stay at the 4 star Hotel Century Old Town, Prague with breakfast
- 2 nights' stay at the 4 star Courtyard by Marriott, Vienna Messe with breakfast
- 2 nights' stay at the 4 star Lion's Garden Hotel, Budapest with breakfast
- 3 lunches and 4 dinners, including a Folklore Show with dinner in Prague and a Dinner Cruise on the River Danube in Budapest
- All excursions as detailed in the Itinerary
- Admission to Prague Castle (including St Vitus' Cathedral and St George's Basilica); the Hofburg Imperial Palace and Schönbrunn Palace (Vienna); Matthias Church, the Fisherman's Bastion and The Statue Park (Budapest)

Includes
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Malta & Gozo

The idyllic islands



Tuesday departures, 6, 20 & 27 May and 7 October 2014
From Gatwick airport

8 days by AIR, from
£739pp

Set in the heart of the Mediterranean, the idyllic island of Malta has been described as one big open-air museum, with so much of its past being visible today including ancient temples and palaces, the world's oldest surviving free standing stone structures and red telephone boxes! A cultural gem bursting with a rich, diverse heritage, stunning scenery, great cuisine and an endearing charm.

Price includes:

- Return flight from Gatwick airport to Malta[†]
- Airport taxes and return transfer from the airport to your hotel
- 7 nights stay at the 4 star Park Hotel, Sliema with dinner & breakfast
- An included excursion to Gozo
- A visit to Valletta including admission to The Malta Experience
- Includes a full day excursion; to The Three Cities; Cospicua, Senglea & Vittoriosa

Includes Escorted Excursions

[†]We have included a reasonable budget for your flights. Should the cost of these fall below or above this amount we will amend the holiday cost to reflect these changes and therefore the price may increase or decrease accordingly. The final price will be confirmed at the time of booking. The advertised prices correct as of 30/12/13 and is based upon departure from Gatwick airport on 6/5/14.

Madeira

Winter Sun



8 days by AIR, from
£669pp

Departing Monday 31 March 2014
From Gatwick airport

Fancy somewhere a bit unusual this winter? Think Madeira. It's a top cruise destination, it's got exotic flora and fauna, mountains, forest, great food and nightlife too, but none of the party crowds. Plus it's got year-round Goldilocks weather, not too hot and not too cold, but just right!

Price includes:

- Return flight from Gatwick airport to Funchal, Madeira^{††}
- Airport taxes and return transfer to the hotel
- 7 nights stay at the 4 star Hotel Raga, Funchal with full board including drinks at dinner.
- Tour of Funchal
- Tour of Western Madeira
- Visit to Quintas do Bom Sucesso botanical gardens

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'A great value package'

THE compact SUV/crossover class has become one of the most hotly contested in the automotive sector, so perhaps it's no surprise that Hyundai has refreshed its ix35 only 3 years after it first launched.

Visually the revised ix35 cuts quite a dash, with the same tall stance. At the front there's a prominent front grille, and swept back headlights; while new LED daytime running lights and reworked rear lamps complete the ix35's a striking visual appearance.

All cars get a 5-star Euro NCAP safety rating; 6 airbags, a suite of electronic stability systems and ISOfix standard child seat anchors. SE Nav and above gets a 7" Touchscreen Satellite Navigation Featuring Full Postcode Recognition, TMC, Reversing Camera and Premium 7 Speaker Sound System.

The new ix35 retains the 1.6-litre GDi petrol and 1.7-litre and 2.0-litre CRDi engines, but adds

REVIEW: HYUNDAI ix35

By Philip Shoulder

@writeonmotoring

a six-speed automatic transmission option on the 2.0-litre 136PS 4WD model.

Aside from styling, the ix35 also gets tweaked suspension settings to improve ride comfort and driving dynamics. The changes have brought about noticeable improvement in both areas. Good visibility and light steering also make town driving and parking a painless process. Stepping inside the ix35's cabin reveals it to be largely unchanged. You're greeted by the same visually appealing and ergonomically well-designed dashboard layout, with a well-positioned and easy-to-use infotainment system.

Everything feels well screwed together, with a decent ergonomic layout, but unfortunately the interior doesn't quite have

the polish of some rivals, such as Honda CR-V and VW Tiguan.

It's easy to get comfortable thanks to plenty of adjustment in the steering column and a well-aligned driving position.

The ix35 makes a good family car, with lots of head- and leg-room throughout and storage levels are pretty decent, too, with central cubbies, four large cup holders and space to stow items around the gear lever. Although its boot opening isn't as wide as that in either a Mazda CX-5 or a Honda CR-V, the boot floor is flat and there's an admirable 591 litres of boot space, which extends to 1,436 litres with the 60/40 split rear seats folded.

Verdict:

Although it still might not quite have the polish of the class leaders, Hyundai's new ix35 builds on the previous model's strengths, offering buyers in the market for a compact SUV an attractively styled, competent and great value package.



• The new Hyundai ix35



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He added: At Fastfit we offer hourly rates which are some of the best in Basingstoke. No job is beyond us and we are quite simply a one-stop shop and more besides. Whether it's an entire engine overhaul or just tweaking the brakes, we will do it, and do it well."

The business is continually expanding and includes a new mobile tyre fitting and home start service. A comprehensive diagnostic service can also be provided and the business issues many dealer level tools ranging

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Chris H

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Models shown for illustrative purposes only. Terms & Conditions: Subject to model and colour availability. Offers applicable at participating dealers and are at the promoter's absolute discretion. Finance is only available to persons aged 18 or over, subject to status. Credit provided by Honda Finance Europe Plc, 470 London Road, Slough, Berkshire SL3 8QY. Servicing: 2 years' complimentary servicing or 25,000 miles, whichever comes first, and includes a maximum of 2 services. Complimentary servicing available with Honda Aspirations (PCP) only and covers the manufacturer's scheduled servicing only. Offer applicable to Used Car Event held between 26 December 2013 to 12 January 2014 and applicable to cars between 1 month and 24 months old.

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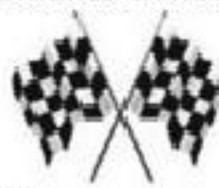
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Weekend of contrasting fortunes for the Bison

Waterlogged pitches put pay to area's football action

BASINGSTOKE'S football teams were affected by the weather at the weekend, as their fixtures were among many to be postponed due to waterlogged pitches.

Whitchurch United's away game to Folland Sports, Tadley Calleva's trip to United Services Portsmouth and Hartley Wintney's home tie against Molesey on Saturday all fell foul of the weather.

Wintney were scheduled to face Epsom and Ewell on Tuesday night, but was called off because of heavy rain.

Whitchurch's game with Bournemouth Poppies on Tuesday did go ahead, but was abandoned before half time due to heavy rain with the Jam Boys 1-0 in front.

All three teams are due to play next on Saturday, but with more rain forecast the matches could be under threat of being called off again.

Whitchurch are expected to host Downton, Tadley are at home to East Cowes Victoria while Wintney will be hoping to travel to Horley Town.

The league tables are largely unchanged, with Wintney 15th in the Combined Counties Premier, Whitchurch sixth in the Wessex Premier and Calleva eighth in the Wessex First Division.

IT WAS another varied weekend for Basingstoke Bison, as a euphoric 5-2 win over Manchester Phoenix on Saturday was followed with a 4-0 drubbing away to Telford Tigers on Sunday.

Bison's weekend had got off to the perfect start when Andy Melachrinou gave the Herd a 1-0 lead after four minutes, but despite hitting the post twice afterwards they were unable to add to their total in the first period.

Aaron Connolly doubled Bison's lead with a powerplay goal at 25:59, before Joe Rand grabbed a third less than three minutes later, leading to Phoenix calling for a time out to regroup.

But Bison were able to add a fourth as Tomas Karpov knocked in Joe Greener's cross at 30:04, giving the Herd a four-goal advantage going into the final period.

Phoenix responded as Jaroslav Cesky tipped in a Robin Kovar shot on the powerplay at 42:36, with Kovar adding a second at 49:00 to halve their arrears.

Karpov was able to put a bit of distance between the teams at 52:23 for Bison's fifth, for a well-earned victory against the second-placed team in the English Ice Hockey Premier League.

Sunday's match against Telford Tigers couldn't have been

By Adam Flinn

news@basingstokeobserver.co.uk

more different, as the Herd were beaten 4-0 following an impressive shutout from Tigers' netminder Declan Ryan.

The hosts scored twice in the first period, as first Daniel Rose took advantage at 2:16 and then Jaroslav Kruzik added a powerplay at 8:03.

Kruzik scored another powerplay at 21:33 to give the Tigers a three-goal cushion, and while Bison were able to resist further attacks, they were unable to score in reply.

The score remained 3-0 until the final minutes when, in a desperate attempt to get a goal on the board, Bison brought forward netminder Dean Skinns for an extra attacker.

As a result, Ricky Plant was able to take advantage of an empty net to get the Tigers' fourth at 58:50 and record a dominant victory for the home team.

Despite Sunday's result, Bison stay top of the table one point ahead of Guildford Flames and two ahead of Manchester Phoenix.

Bison next face the Tigers in a rematch on Saturday, before the away journey to Phoenix on Sunday.



• Bison player-coach Doug Sheppard (Picture by Grant King (5holephotography.co.uk))

Sport Bites

Overton beaten

OVERTON RFC's trip to Farnborough was one of the few sporting fixtures to survive the weather on Saturday, although the visitors would rather it hadn't as they lost 27-5.

The Laverstoke Park side have endured a difficult season so far, and this latest result means Overton remain bottom of the Hampshire One league table.

They will hope for an improvement against high-flying Solent University, who Overton host in Saturday's match.

Ester, 12, claims junior tennis prize

BASINGSTOKE tennis ace Ester Adeshina, 12, has been awarded the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Lawn Tennis Association Junior Player of the Year 2013, in recognition of a successful 12 months for the young star.

During this time, Ester represented Great Britain on multiple occasions, including in the 12 and under Girls Tennis Europe Winter Cups, and in international friendlies against Croatia, Belgium and France.

She was also a member of the 14 and under Girls David Lloyd Southampton team, who won the Team Tennis Premier National Finals back in July.

As well as her team performances, Ester won the national title at the 12 and under Girls Winter National Tour in November.

The Basingstoke youngster is currently ranked third in the AEGON 12 and under girls rankings, and will be hoping for another successful season in 2014.

Do you have a story to share with our readers?

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Darts ace Hogan's Lakeside dream ended in thriller against Mitchell

BASINGSTOKE darts ace Paul Hogan was knocked out of the BDO World Championship at Lakeside on Tuesday, after an entertaining first round encounter with number

15 seed Scott Mitchell. Hogan was within one leg of taking the match, but ultimately lost by three sets to two as Mitchell won the last three legs to take the win.

Hogan won the first set 3-0 before Mitchell won the second and third sets 3-1 and 3-2, with the Basingstoke darter taking the fourth 3-0 to set up a decider.

The first four legs of the final set went against the darts until Hogan held his throw to move within a leg of the second round, but Mitchell rallied to take the last three legs and the vic-

tory. It came after the 50-year-old from Bucks had beaten Czech Republic darter Karel Sedlacek 3-1 in the preliminary round on Monday, in what was

his first match at Lakeside since 2006.

He would have played number two seed James Wilson in the second round if he had beaten Mitchell.

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See you at the game

Inside: Weekend of contrasting fortunes for the Bison | Darts ace Hogan's Lakeside dream ended in thriller against Mitchell

DRAGONS ARE RARING TO GO

Bristow wants match action after frustrating postponements

BASINGSTOKE boss Jason Bristow is itching for his side to get back on the pitch after the recent bad weather has decimated their recent schedule.

The Dragons have had their last two matches – against Farnborough and Tonbridge Angels – called off as a result of waterlogged pitches.

And they have also had their match against Gosport Borough abandoned in the second half.

However, they entertain Bath City on Saturday, and Bristow is hopeful the Camrose pitch will hold out for the game to go ahead.

"I've been on the pitch [on Wednesday] morning and it's not bad at all," he said.

"As long as we don't get too much bad weather between now and Saturday, we'll have a game on."

The Dragons' injury worries are easing, and the addition of three players around the festive period has given Bristow even more options.

And, according to the Dragons' boss, these options are only adding to the quality of his squad.

"It's frustrating – even more so because we've got such a strong squad at the moment, and we're

By James Booker

news@basingstokeobserver.co.uk

in such a good place.

"We've got nearly everybody fit, and the competition of place is really very good."

"The new players are only making us stronger – Matt Partridge we already know about from earlier this season [when he spent time on loan at the Camrose]."

"Ben Wright has obviously been here before – he's only going to add quality, and Louie Soares is more than competent at this level and leagues above too."

We're strengthening all the time."

Basingstoke's last full match came against Farnborough on Boxing Day, a match they convincingly won 4-0 to halt a recent poor run.

"We've come off the back of a 4-0 win against Farnborough, and even though we were 1-0 down against Gosport before it was called off, we were much the better side, and were convinced we were going to go on and win the game."

"We've still been able to train – we've kept ticking over, and



• A waterlogged Camrose prevented any play between Basingstoke and Tonbridge Angels last week, but manager Jason Bristow (inset) is hopeful Saturday's game against Bath will go ahead (Pictures by Les Chase)

training's been outstanding in terms of quality, tempo and intensity. "I don't think we've missed out too much on fitness – we're raring to go this Saturday and can't wait for the game to be on." Weather permitting, the hectic fixture schedule will continue during the rest of January. They also have a Hampshire Senior Cup clash with Whitehawk, Eastbourne Borough and Sutton in the league

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